Written Testimony of Rep. Jackson
Submitted to the Committee of Veteran's Affairs

As America's veterans pledged their lives to protect our freedom, and to promote freedom throughout the world at the call of the Commander in Chief of the United States, it is only right that Congress at all times adequately fund veterans health care., Even facing opposition from the Commander in Cheif. Michigan must be at the forefront of sending a concise message to congress; **It is morally unacceptable to ever attempt to balance this nation's budget on the backs of those who have sacrificed their very lives to protect it.**

While this might appear to be a "no brainier" to many of us, Veterans have legitimate concerns.

- In 2005 the VA faced a 1 billion dollar funding shortfall due to the growing needs of veterans and the rise of long-term health care cost
- In 2006 because of initial inadequate funding appropriations, congress had to appropriate an emergency 1.2 billion to cover VA costs
- In 2007 President Bush requested increases in veterans prescription drug co – payments, which would have in some instances doubled co pay cost to veterans
- Furthering the blow, President Bush proposed this year that military service men and women pay increases in fees for TRICARE the military health care program. The Military Officers Association of America reported that the proposal over three years would :
  - Increase the enrollment fee for TRICARE Prime, the managed care version of the program, from $230 to as high as $750 for an individual. And from $460 to as high as $1,500 for a family.

Veterans and active duty military personnel do not deserve to live consumed by worry and fear because adequate funding for their healthcare cost is always "in the balance." Or to live concerned that greater costs will be shifted to them. I submit to you that many Veterans have already paid an ultimate price, having lost limbs, and sometimes their sanity fighting for our nation. **Will we charge them more? Michigan says NO!**

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.